

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NASA-01 CU-02 PM-04 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01

/056 W

-----261219Z 123300 /22

R 260740Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5549

USIA WASHDC

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DEPT PASS NASA FOR ZOOK

USIA PASS TO ICS/DS PROGRAM OFFICER WALTER FROELICH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: MARS/VIKING MISSION: SOVIETS PROTEST DISTRIBUTION OF
"SCIENCE" MAGAZINE

1. INTERKOSMOS DIRECTOR FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT VERESHCHETIN CALLED SCICOUNS TO INTERKOSMOS MARCH 25 TO SHOW HIM LETTER FROM THE INSTITUTE OF SPACE RESEARCH ADDRESSED TO INTERKOSMOS CHAIRMAN DR. PETROV PROTESTING THE DISTRIBUTION OF "ANTI-SOVIET" LITERATURE AT MARS/VIKING SYMPOSIUM HELD AT INSTITUTE MARCH 11. FYI. THE OFFENDING LITERATURE TURNED OUT TO BE THE DECEMBER 17, 1976 EDITION OF SCIENCE MAGAZINE, DEVOTED TO THE MARS/VIKING MISSIONS, WHICH ALSO CONTAINED A THREE PARAGRAPH REFERENCE TO AN APPEAL ISSUED BY SAKHAROV ON BEHALF OF SERGEY KOVALEV. THE MAGAZINES WERE LEFT FOR DISTRIBUTION BY THE MARS/VIKING PANEL ON A TABLE IN THE AUDITORIUM OF THE INSTITUTE WHERE THE SYMPOSIUM WAS HELD. END FYI. VERESHCHETIN SAID THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PAINED AT THIS INCIDENT WHICH MIGHT BE VIEWED AS A DELIBERATE PROVOCATION, SINCE ONE OF THE AMERICANS PRESENT AT THE SYMPOSIUM

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(VERESHCHETIN WAS NOT SURE WHO) HAD REQUESTED A LIST OF SOVIET SCIENTISTS TO WHOM COPIES MIGHT ALSO BE SENT DIRECTLY. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE GENERALLY EXCELLENT RELATIONS BETWEEN INTERKOSMOS AND THE EMBASSY AND NASA, THE MATTER WOULD NOT BE TAKEN TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUT RATHER STOP AT THE LEVEL OF AN ORAL WARNING ISSUED TO THE SCICOUNS THAT SUCH INCIDENTS SHOULD NOT BE REPEATED.

2. SCICOUNS NOTED THAT "SCIENCE" WAS ONE OF THE MOST HIGHLY RESPECTED U.S. SCIENCE JOURNALS AND THAT THE ISSUE IN QUESTION WAS DEVOTED ALMOST ENTIRELY TO SCIENTIFIC REPORTS ON THE MARS/VIKING MISSIONS. THE PANEL HAD DISTRIBUTED COPIES AT EVERY SYMPOSIUM HELD IN ITS RECENT EUROPEAN TOUR AS AN AID TO THE AUDIENCE IN UNDERSTANDING THE MARS/VIKING MISSIONS AND THAT IT WAS DISTRIBUTED AT THE SPACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE WITH THIS SOLE PURPOSE IN MIND. SCICOUNS ALSO DENIED KNOWLEDGE OF ANY REQUEST BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL OR THE MARS/VIKING PANEL FOR A LIST OF SOVIET SCIENTISTS TO WHOM THE JOURNAL WOULD BE SENT SEPARATELY. SCICOUNS CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT HE WAS SURPRISED AT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE AND EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT THIS INCIDENT COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS A "DELIBERATE PROVOCATION."

3. COMMENT: DURING THE ABOVE RELATED EXCHANGE VERESCHETIN WAS OFF HIS USUALLY SUAVE FORM, HURRYING THROUGH THE READING OF THE LETTER AND THE ISSUING OF THE WARNING AS IF HE HAD A REPUGNANT, ILLOGICAL BUT OBLIGATORY FUNCTION TO PERFORM. AS HE ROSE FROM THE TABLE HIS DEMEANOR CHANGED. HE SMILINGLY AND ALMOST TIMIDLY INQUIRED AS TO WHETHER THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NASA CONCURRENCE ON THE SOVIET PROPOSED TEXT FOR THE SHUTTLE SALYUT JOINT STUDIES, ADDING THAT SUCH INCIDENTS SHOULD NOT IMPEDE BILATERAL COOPERATION.

4. WHILE THIS INCIDENT HAS DONE NO GREAT DAMAGE, IT POINTS OUT THE NEED FOR U.S. DELEGATIONS TO CAREFULLY REVIEW ALL HANDOUTS INTENDED FOR THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER SEEMINGLY INNOCUOUS, AND IN QUESTIONABLE CASES PROVIDE THE EMBASSY AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REVIEW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND COMMENT. IN THE CASE IN QUESTION THE SCIENCE JOURNAL ARRIVED AT THE EMBASSY BY POUCH THE MORNING THE SYMPOSIUM WAS HELD, AND THERE WAS NO TIME AVAILABLE TO SCAN THE MATERIAL BEFORE DISTRIBUTION. END COMMENT.
MATLOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS, PUBLICATIONS PROCUREMENT, SPACE PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2986838
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARS/VIKING MISSION: SOVIETS PROTEST DISTRIBUTION OF "SCIENCE" MAGAZINE
TAGS: TSPA, PFOR, UR, US
To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/58023ab1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009